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INFORMATION REPORT

CD NO.

Germany (Russian Zone) COUNTRY

DATE DISTR. 11 JUL 50

SUBJECT

Professor Dr. Robert Rompe

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PLACE

ACQUIRED DATE OF INFO.

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NO. OF PAGES 3

NO. OF ENCLS.

SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO.

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- In addition to being Physics Professor at Berlin Humboldt University, Director of its Second Institute of Physics and, in a semi-official capacity, scientific adivser to the Education Ministry of the Soviet Zone, Professor Dr. Robert Rompe is now also head of all industrial research in the people's-owned enterprises of the Soviet Zone. He has stated that he intends to decrease his activity for the Education Ministry and to devote himself more exclusively to scientific research. However, upon the insistence of his political friends, he feels obligated to make a compromise between his desire for pure scientific activity and the necessity of remaining politically active. He, therefore, has agreed. to direct industrial research in the socialized sector of German economy.
- Rompe stated that he was about to found, in the framework of the organization of industrial research, a research service (Studiengesellschaft) for the development and improvement of sources of light. In an effort to illustrate the importance of organized industrial research, he cited, as a particular instance, the work done in the recent past by the research and development department of the Zeiss works in Jena. **
 - The Zeiss works has developed and exhibited at the Leipzig Fair, an ultrasonic direction finder to be used in fishing.
 - It has successfully developed a new-type mirror objective for the elimination of chromatic mistakes and mistakes caused by spheric aberration, as they appear in lens objectives; at the same time, the plant has constructed microscopes and cameras for X-ray screen photography which function with this mirror objective.
 - c. Good progress has been made in the construction of Schmidt-type telescopes the first of which is expected to be completed in about a year. Rompe stated that original plans for building such telescopes with a mirror surface diameter of 2.50 m. had to be abandoned and that the type under construction has a diameter of 2.00 m.
 - d. The plant has been charged with and successfully completed the overhauling of the refractor of the Academy observatory in Berlin-Babelsberg. It did so, Rompe stated, by emulating a principle developed in the United States for such purposes which results in a more accurate correction of the spheric mistakes by neglecting the chromatic corrections in the optical system and

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by reducing the chromatic mistakes at the same time, either through insertion or filter screens into the system or through separation of the light (observation in different focal planes).

- When questioned about the planning of research by the State, Rompe, of course, З٠ strongly advocated the idea; he was forced to acknowledge, however, that research runs the risk of being greatly hampered by governmental bureacracy. He related the following example to illustrate this point: the Oberspreewerk in Berlin-Oberschöneweide has been engaged in the development of devices for the measurement of physical qualities as functions of frequency. The plant forwarded proposals to the Planning Ministry in Moscow concerning a frequency range within the limits of ten thousand to one million Hertz. Moscov accepted the plan but amended it with the order to extend the frequency range so as to include the entire range from ten "ertz to one hundred million Hertz which, as Rompe remarked, was absolute nonsense, because so large a range must be broken down into smaller ones in which different principles of measurement and devices have to be applied. After this had been pointed out to Moscow, a new order not only confirmed the one prescribing the impossibly large range but also required two model samples instead of one and fixed a close deadline for their completion. The plant had to undertake their construction, although it was believed to be a waste of material and effort, and, in order to complete them in the prescribed time, did a very bad job. After the deadline, nobody was allowed to make any improvements on the devices because the time allowed for them in the plan had expired. The devices then remained unchanged in the plantfor nearly three months, whereupon they were claimed by Moscow. They were sent there and, as became known later, arrived at a wrong destination. In subsequent correspondence between Moscow and the works, the latter proposed to effect certain changes of the devices in order to somehow make them workable. This, however, was declined because the plan did not allow time for such additional work. In Rompe's opinion, the devices are somewhere in Moscow unused and unusable.
- This, while admitting the possibility of hampering effects effected by State planning on research, Rompe pinned the responsibility for them entirely on inefficient bureaucracy which, he hoped, could be reduced to harmless proportions in his industrial research sector. In this connection, he made rather bitter comments about Minister Selbmann who, he said, is one of the worst bureaucrats always trying to oppose his, Rompe's, efforts to make planning work smooth and sensible, always insisting on carrying out Russian orders to the letter and, thus, endangering the rational operation of the whole system.

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6. Rompe's present political outlook in regard to pending events, as developed in many conversations, can thus be summarized:

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- a. There will be no shooting war because neither the Russians more the Americans want it.
- b. The cold war will gradually be settled. Negotiations between the Americans and the Russians are being held "secretly" without the public being aware of them; they will eventually result in an agreement whereby the two systems can live with each other.
- c. As for Germany, the two German governments will be obliged, under the pressure of all Allies concerned, to recognize each other and, for some time to come, two Germanys will live as separate sovereign states with close economic bonds. As an example of the desire for cooperation, he cited the cancellation of the Eastern Whitsun parade in West Berlin which was the result of Russian intervention with the East German government. He further believes that the Russians will, in not too distant a future, leave their occupation zone regardless of the decision taken by the Western powers in their respective zones. If the Western powers then choose to remain in Germany, the Communists will have a propaganda platform which may enable them to conquer politically all of Germany.

7.	Although Rompe has not come to West Germany since September 1949, he has tried to maintain relations with West German scientists. He has started	
25X1 _	a program of inviting 'est German physicists to Berlin to give lectures at the Humboldt University.	
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25X1 * [25X1	Rompe's new job as head of industrial research comes under the Ministry of Economy.	
25X1**	Comment: Rompe is a member of the Kuratorium of the Zeiss foundation.	